

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT & MAJOR PROJECTS CABINET MEMBER MEETING

5.00pm 10 JUNE 2009

COMMITTEE ROOM 1, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Kemble (Cabinet Member)

Also in attendance: Councillor Turton (Opposition Spokesperson – Labour)

PART ONE

1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1a Declarations of Interests

1.1 There were none

1b Exclusion of Press and Public

1.2 In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (“the Act), the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Employment and Major Projects considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A (3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I(1) of the Act).

1.3 **RESOLVED** – that the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes held on 5 May 2009 be agreed and signed by the Cabinet Member.

3. CABINET MEMBER'S COMMUNICATIONS

European Partnership to help the unemployed

3.1 The Cabinet Member reported that the BHCC Economic Development team had partnered with City College Brighton & Hove and French organisation Maison de

l'Initiative in Grand Synthe France to develop a bid to Interreg, a European fund that supports innovative approaches to helping vulnerable groups enter the labour market.

- 3.2 The project aimed to provide targeted support to unemployed people wishing to work in the Construction Industry. If successful the bid would provide additional resources for the creation of a local labour scheme for the city and would link to the emerging Supplementary Planning Document for Infrastructure & Developer contributions; bid results would be announced in Autumn 2009.

Building the Future of Construction

- 3.3 The Cabinet Member reported that over 70 delegates attended the Building the Future of Construction business breakfast held on 10 June 2009 at Stanmer House. The event brought together industry experts to provide advice and information on; supply chains, up coming contracts and working collaboratively to overcome economic challenges.
- 3.4 Among the contracting opportunities discussed were multi-million pound build programmes within the health service, the universities and schools providing smaller sub-contracting opportunities for local firms extending over the next ten years or more. Delegates were encouraged to invest in staff training, research and development in order to remain competitive.
- 3.5 Recent improvements within the Council's Planning Department were noted and welcomed particularly with regard to pre-application advice.

Taking Action to support enterprise and employment

- 3.6 The Cabinet Member reported that the City Employment & Skills Steering group (CESSG), had agreed a joint action plan to support business start-up, business growth, employment and skills training. Taking into account the current economic conditions the partnership had developed a programme of short, medium and long-term actions designed to create the right conditions for the economic prosperity of the city. A significant step in achieving the agreed actions would be the signing of an 'Accord' by each of the CESSG members committing them to collaborative working; sharing of information and intelligence and joint funding bids to address gaps in provision.

Supercities

- 3.7 The Cabinet Member reported that HSBC Bank had commissioned a report that concluded that Brighton was set to become one of five "supercities" that could save the country's economy.
- 3.8 The report said that Brighton, along with Leeds, Liverpool, London and Newcastle would become a supercity focusing on new economic endeavours like nanotechnology, cybernetics and other bio and technological sciences over the next 20 years.
- 3.9 The supercity phenomenon had been driven by the recession which had highlighted the need to find innovative ways of working in order to increase international business and entrepreneurship.

- 3.10 While Newcastle and Leeds were expected to become science and financial hubs Brighton would cash in on its 'liberated' image to create an alternative economy.
- 3.11 Report author, Martin Raymond of the Future Laboratory said: "Despite being by far the smallest of the five supercities Brighton has a growing number of people involved in creative media and marketing, known as 'soft skill industries' that are popular points of investment.
- 3.12 It also has a lot of grass roots research and investment in stem cells, robotics and renewables.
- 3.13 The combination of this technological vibrancy and good schools and universities make it a very appealing place to invest.
- 3.14 The report became interesting when we realised there were other cities with these qualities but they didn't have the lifestyle that Brighton offers, which is the human aspect of investment.
- 3.15 It is close to the sea, it has a nice city centre and the Downs all around it - people want to live, work and stay in Brighton".

4. ITEMS RESERVED FOR DISCUSSION

- 4.1 This is not applicable to this meeting as there are no reports.

5. PETITIONS

5(i) Petition – Concern at Arrival of Major Food Retailer – Portland Road

- 5.1 The Cabinet Member considered the following petition presented at Council on 30 April 2009 by Councillor Oxley and signed by 420 people:

"We, the undersigned, believe that the arrival of a major food retailer in Portland Road, would be devastating to local trade, would ultimately reduce competition and choice for local residents as businesses would be forced to close and would do nothing to help local traders manage the effects of the worsening recession.

We also believe that another store selling alcohol is not necessary given the large number of outlets already selling such items in the area.

We call on Brighton and Hove City Council to defend small and medium sized businesses in the city in view of the economic downturn and for the future diversity of the city's economic base."

- 5.2 The Cabinet Member explained that in addition to the reply given at Council to this petition, he would like to confirm that a written report would be submitted to the next Cabinet Member meeting for Enterprise and Major Projects which would draw together research in this area.
- 5.3 **RESOLVED** – That the petition be noted.

5(ii) Petition – Calling for the Redevelopment of Preston Street

5.4 The Cabinet Member considered the following petition presented at Council on 30 April by Councillor Kitcat and signed by 54 people:

“We the undersigned traders, hoteliers and Ward Councillors are writing to you with regards the Preston Street area of Regency Ward.

The past few years has seen a noticeable decline in the fortunes of Preston Street with increasing numbers of businesses closing and properties remaining vacant. Preston Street is a key part of the tourist experience, providing a diverse choice of food and drink to visitors and residents. With the i360 tower still planned to go ahead and with thought to keeping Brighton & Hove’s competitive edge, we call on the administration to take bold steps.

We ask that the foot and vehicle traffic implications of the i360 are fully considered and that the funds are found to support Preston Street being turned into a mixed-used street as has been done so successfully in New Road. We believe this change will support the growth of a more continental café culture with more outdoor dining and an improved ambience to the whole street.

We urge you to consider this matter and include residence and traders in reviving our key restaurant street.”

5.5 Councillor Kitcat attended the meeting and stressed that Preston Street had serious problems with double parking and vacant and empty restaurants. There was concern about the future of remaining restaurants. He asked if the council could look again at how Preston Street could work and become an attractive street to visit.

5.6 The Cabinet Member replied to state that Preston Street was an important location for the city particularly in terms of its reputation for a diverse restaurant offer and did receive regeneration funding in recent years in recognition of that. There were a number of areas in the city that were in need of urban realm improvements, Preston Street being only one of them. Prior to the commencement date for the i360, it would be difficult to provide a compelling case to prioritise Preston Street for refurbishment over and above other areas in the city which were equally in need of refurbishment and subject to higher footfall. When there was a start date for the i360, the council would work with the Preston Street traders and any appropriate trade associations.

5.7 **RESOLVED** – That the petition be noted.

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

6.1 There were none.

7. DEPUTATIONS

7.1 There were none.

8. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

8.1 There were none.

9. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

9.1 The Cabinet Member considered the following written question from Councillor Turton:

“Given that the Learning and Skills Council will be abolished in 2010 and responsibilities for 14-19 education and learning will be transferred to local authorities and two new agencies, (Skills Funding Agency and Young People Learning Agency), could the Cabinet Member explain (a) What preparations the City Council has made for this transfer and (b) What preparatory discussions have taken place with relevant agencies at national and/or regional level for links to be forged with these two agencies?”

9.2 The Cabinet Member replied to state that a) The City Council was well prepared for the transfer of responsibility for the commissioning of 16-18 education from April 2010. Children & Young Peoples Trust staff began working in a virtual team with Learning & Skills Learning staff 18 months before these announcements were made as both organisations saw the value of working more closely.

9.3 A Transition group, chaired by the Assistant Director for Learning, Schools and Skills in the Children & Young Peoples Trust, containing representatives from other CYPT Teams (Secondary and Special Schools, Quality & Performance, Finance and the Learning Partnership), Economic Development, Human Resources and representatives from the Learning & Skills Council and 14-19 Partnership Board had been meeting regularly since the announcement of changes in October 2008.

9.4 A two stage process submitting the city's vision of transition arrangements and outlining how the CYPT would engage and work in partnership with neighbouring Local Authorities had been completed and shared with TMT/Cabinet. It proposed that the three Local Authorities needed to work together and plan and commission provision within the local travel to learn area that stretches out to Worthing in the west, Eastbourne in the east and Crawley in the north.

9.5 National announcements had been made on staff transfer under TUPE arrangements and a total of seven Learning & Skills Council staff would be absorbed into the Children & Young Peoples Trust from April 2010. The additional posts were being included in the current CYPT restructure of Tier 3 and 4 posts.

9.6 b) The Skills Funding Agency would have a regional satellite office in the city and once transference of staff to the SFA began further preparatory work would take place.

9.7 The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) which would have overall responsibility for all Apprenticeships in England was operational and the City Council was currently

working on a Memorandum of Understanding with NAS to clarify both parties roles and responsibilities.

- 9.8 The Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) would have oversight of the transition phase of 16-18 commissioning. The YPLA would have a small base in the city and further preparatory work was ongoing with both the YPLA and GOSE.
- 9.9 Councillor Turton thanked the Cabinet Member for his response and asked if any of the new eco apprenticeships were behind the council's agenda? Would the opportunities of the Memorandum of Understanding (between the City Council and the National Apprenticeship Service) enable the active encouragement of eco apprenticeships?
- 9.10 The Cabinet Member replied to say that this question was appropriate to the remit of the Cabinet Member for Central Services and it would therefore be submitted to the Central Services Cabinet Member Meeting.

10. NOTICES OF MOTIONS

- 10.1 There were none.

The meeting concluded at 5.25pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of